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## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Governor Carcieri Announces 85 Percent of Rhode Island Elementary and Middle Schools Are Meeting Their Targets**

#### ***68 Percent of Rhode Island Schools are High Performing; 39 schools receive Board of Regents Commendations***

PROVIDENCE - Results from the latest round of school-performance classifications show that 68 percent of the elementary and middle schools in the state (171 schools) are high performing, up from 62 percent last year.

The classifications show that 85 percent of the elementary and middle schools in the state (213 schools) met all of the targets established by the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), up from 70 percent last year. A total of 250 elementary and middle schools were evaluated.

The Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education awarded a Regents' Commended School designation to 39 schools (16 percent), in recognition of exceptionally high performance or significant improvement in English language arts and mathematics over two years.

The classifications, which Governor Donald L. Carcieri released this morning (May 30th), are based on the results of state tests in mathematics, reading, and writing administered last October in all elementary and middle schools. Those tests showed statewide improvements of 4 percentage points in reading and 3 points in mathematics.

“Our schools, particularly our urban schools, have made significant improvements in meeting their targets. This is a tribute to the continued hard work of students, teachers, and administrators,” Governor Carcieri said. “The increasing number of schools that are now classified as high performing and those that are making significant progress show that all of our schools and our students can succeed. While we still have much work ahead, we should be proud of our progress in improving education in Rhode Island.”

“The classifications released today show that school improvement has touched the lives of students in Rhode Island,” said James A. DiPrete, Chairman of the Board of Regents. “Our schools must meet annual targets for all of their student groups, including students with disabilities and English language learners. Though faced with many challenges, more than 200 of our schools have met all of their annual targets. They are truly meeting the needs of all students.”

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“We have classified schools in Rhode Island for six years, and during that time we have worked intensively with schools making insufficient progress,” said Peter McWalters, Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education. “Today, we see that many of these schools have achieved positive results. I am confident that by working together to bring all students to proficiency we are on the path toward continuous school improvement.”

Based on the classifications released today, 36 elementary and middle schools have missed targets for multiple years and will therefore face some form of sanction, such as providing parents the option to choose another school, offering supplemental education services, or undergoing restructuring.

Among the schools facing sanctions, however, 12 met all of their targets this year: Veterans Memorial, in Central Falls; Flora Curtis and M. Virginia Cunningham, in Pawtucket; and Alfred Lima Sr., Charles Fortes, George West, Harry Kizirian, Laurel Hill Avenue, Nathanael Greene and Oliver Hazard Perry Middle Schools, Pleasant View, and Windmill Street, in Providence. These schools must meet their targets for two years in a row to be clear from sanctions.

Schools that missed targets for two years and will face sanctions for the first time are: Alan Shawn Feinstein and Ella Risk, in Central Falls; B.F. Norton, in Cumberland; Frank E. Thompson, in Newport; Fallon Memorial, Joseph Jenks Junior High, Potter-Burns, and Samuel Slater Junior High, in Pawtucket; Edmund W. Flynn, Robert L. Bailey IV, Webster Avenue, and William D’Abate, in Providence; Wakefield Hills, in West Warwick; and the Harris School, in Woonsocket.

The classifications released today are the second set of classifications based on the state assessments developed in partnership with New Hampshire and Vermont through the New England Common Assessment Program. All students in grades 3 through 8 were tested.

To be classified as moderately performing or high performing, schools must meet the English language arts and mathematics targets for the school as a whole and for each of 8 groups of students within the school (Asian, Black, Hispanic, Native American, and White students; students with disabilities, students living in poverty, and English-language learners). The targets are the same for all groups. Schools are held accountable for each group in which there are 45 or more students across the tested grades.

In addition to the 171 schools classified as high performing, 52 (21 percent) were moderately performing and 27 (11 percent) were classified as making “insufficient progress.”

The schools must also meet test participation-rate targets of 95 percent and a school-attendance target of 90 percent.

The classifications were released at the Charles N. Fortes Elementary School in Providence.

High-school classifications, based on tests administered in March, will be released in the fall.

A complete list of the classifications of the elementary and middle schools as well as documents explaining the classification process are posted on the RIDE Web site, [www.ride.ri.gov](http://www.ride.ri.gov) - under “2007 School Performance Classifications.”

